

The Support Worker of Emile Durkheim House

It wasn't even symmetrical. Babs had characteristically desecrated the only piece of real wood in the House. The mantle was solid mahogany. Above it hung a large expensive mirror, the only open thing in the office. Now it was obscured by Babs's arborite monstrosity.

When Babs relieved Gladys (at exactly one minute to midnight), Gladys was sincerely angry. She demanded to know what Babs thought she was doing. She didn't accept that anything a man could do a woman could do better. Not when the woman was Babs. Didn't we have a maintenance *man*? Now she'd screwed up the whole office. Didn't she know there were other people who used the office besides herself? Why didn't she ask first? How was Gladys going to fix her hair, when she couldn't even see her reflection? Babs really screwed up.

Babs said she was only trying to help out by doing a little maintenance at night. Every one else thought it was nice. That was a bald lie. Babs hadn't canvassed anyone yet. It wasn't like her to care what anyone thought. She'd pretend to, after it didn't matter.

Adam and I would have told her. She'd characteristically butchered the mantle for nothing, to put a few tapes that hardly anyone ever watched--where they "belonged." It was the same compulsion all over again. She'd done it to prove female superiority. Hers at least. Adam was concerned about wasting time. Babs could have been doing something